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AT&T's on-line service, called the **Directory of Directories**, allows users free access to the **Internet's** first road map. The **directory** provides users with a one-stop **shopping** list of all the **Internet's** services and resources simply by conducting a word search. Users can access the **directory of directories** through Wide Area Information Service (WAIS), Archie, Telnet, Gopher, and electronic mail. WAIS, Archie, and Gopher are all network-based information tools that have been made popular by the **Internet** community. The service is free both to users and for **Internet** providers to list information about their service. According to industry analysts, this is the first time that users will be able to find out where information is stored on the **Internet** from a single location. The **Directory of Directories** is part of the **Internet** Network Information Centre (InterNIC) service. The InterNIC is a 3-member organization created by the National Science Foundation to provide network information services and is comprised of AT&T's **Directory of Directories**, Network Solutions' Registration Services, and General Atomics/Cerfnet's Information Services.

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AT&T's on-line service, called the '**Direct ry of Directories**', allows users free access to the **Internet's** first road map.

The **directory** provides users with a 'one stop' shopping list of all the **Internet's** services and resources simply by conducting a word search. Users can access the **directory of directories** through Wide Area Information Service (WAIS), Archie, Telnet, Gopher, and e-mail. WAIS, Archie, and Gopher are all network-based information tools that have been made popular by the **Internet** community.

The **directory** will point the user in the right direction to find the information that they are looking for," said Erik Grimmelmann, marketing director for AT&T's national information infrastructure. "The service is free both to users and for **Internet** providers to list information about their service. We are currently hoping that users will contact us to let us know how AT&T can make the **directory** better and easier to use."

According to industry analysts, this is the first time that users will be able to find out where information is stored on the **Internet** from a single location. According to Marshall Rose, president of Dover Beach Consulting and an expert on the **Internet**, while there have been many different **directories** on the system, some of which have been available for more than a decade, this is the first centralised **directory**.

"This is the first time that someone has put together all of the different **directories** into one place where users can find out about what is available," said Rose.

"It is a little early to say how well the service is going to be received, but I think that users will find it helpful to know where to look to find out where the information is located."

The **Directory of Directories** is part of the **Internet** Network Information Centre (InterNIC) service. The InterNIC is a three member organisation created by the National Science Foundation to provide network information services and is comprised of AT&T's **Directory of Directories**, Network Solutions' Registration Services, and General Atomics/Cerfnet's Information Services.

The Registration Service provides users with an easy way to obtain an **Internet** address, while the Information Service is designed to tell users more about the **Internet** and its resources.

During the last five years, the **Internet** has grown at an exponential rate. From 1988 to 1992, the number of hosts on the **Internet** has increased nine times from 80 000 users to 727 000. Furthermore, the number of networks tied into the **Internet** has been doubling every 12 months.

Internet, the mother of all networks, is made up of active networks from all over the world. Any network that runs TCP/IP and is interconnected with other networks is a part of it. Currently there are at least 7000 separate global networks.

Industry observers say that during the next few years, the largest influx of hosts and networks joining the **Internet** will be from Europe, and especially Eastern Europe, as technology begins to advance in the former communist countries. Other areas that have recently become part of the **Internet** are the Pacific Rim, and Africa.

One of **Internet's** biggest growth areas has been sponsored by commercial users. In the past, corporate users had limited access to the **Internet** because, according to NFS regulations, all communications on it have to have some qualities that would benefit the research community.

However, corporate users gained more freedom in 1991 when several regional networks including, Cerfnet, PSI, and Altnet, joined together to form the Commercial **Internet** Exchange (CIX). According to Susan Estrada, executive director of Cerfnet and president of CIX, before the introduction of CIX, 99% of the Cerfnet users were researchers and academics, now 90% of users are commercial.

Marshall Rose added that with the spread of the **Internet** beyond academia, a **directory** was vital simply for new users to find their way around it.

"Before the AT&T **directory** there were so many different routes through the **Internet** that a user could easily get lost and that was incredibly frustrating. Now this should really make things a lot smoother," Rose said. "Users not only want to know where research is located on the **Internet** but also how to contact businesses and how to sell and use services that are available on it."

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